

# ASPIRA, INC. OF NEW JERSEY

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September 8, 1987

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Mr. Joseph A. Furfey  
Manager  
First Jersey National Bank  
One Exchange Place  
Jersey City, N.J. 07302

Dear Mr. Furfey:

ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey continued to reach out to Puerto Rican, Hispanic and other minority students seeking to actualize their potential.

During the 1986-1987 program year, ASPIRA, through its Business Careers, Health Careers, Talent Search, Leadership Development and Drop-out programs, was able to serve over 1,100 students on an ongoing basis while placing nearly 200 in post-secondary institutions. An additional 1,400 students benefited from ASPIRA's leadership retreats, college trips, career workshops, financial aid workshops, SAT review courses, and cultural exposure activities.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1986-1987 PROGRAM YEAR

### Leadership Retreats

As in previous years, ASPIRA provided students with leadership training in partnership with the Princeton Education Center at Blairstown, New Jersey. Students were taught in an "adventure based" setting, through experiential exercises; problem solving, group dynamics, and decision-making skills.

The leadership retreats remove the Aspirantes from their familiar environment and places them in an environment conducive to learning without normal distractions. This opportunity allows the Aspirantes to establish their club workplans for the year as well as reinforce their commitment to community involvement.

### INTERNSHIPS

Technological fields continue to play an important role in everyday life and in business environments. ASPIRA in an effort to expose students to "high tech" careers

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ventured into a program with AT&T with the intent of giving the Aspirantes a better understanding of the corporate environment. The program had two parts. The first part was an orientation and information day. Students were given a tour of the AT&T headquarters in Basking Ridge and then AT&T employees spoke to the students about various career opportunities available within the communications industry and answered students' questions.

In addition, AT&T hired 11 of our students to work as summer interns. As a means to help prepare the students for the future, AT&T and ASPIRA made the students go through normal job seeking procedures. The students interested in the internship positions had to prepare resumes, cover letters and then had a series of interviews before anyone was hired. This procedure alone was invaluable to the students.

The internship positions themselves, of course, were the heart of the program. Not only were the students exposed to the inner workings of the corporate environment, they also acquired technical skills, and enhanced their interpersonal skills.

The internship experience culminated with the interns' involvement in the production of a media presentation on the value of internships. This film will be used for future recruitment purposes.

Due to the success of this program AT&T has committed to continuing this type of fruitful relationship next year and in years to come.

#### YOUTH CONFERENCE

Aware of the many problems facing young people today, the ASPIRA Youth Congress, a student organization made up of ASPIRA club officials, organized a conference to address and discuss; drug prevention, sex education, bilingual education, student/parent relations, and the drop-out problem which plagues today's youth. The Second Annual Youth Conference, was organized, planned and implemented, strictly by the ASPIRA students. The organizers were able to get the Honorable Roberto Menendez, Mayor of Union City and first Hispanic Mayor in New Jersey, to give the keynote address.

The concerns voiced at the conference, in regard to bilingual education, were presented by two of the ASPIRA Youth Congress members during a hearing on the Bilingual Education Statute, at the New Jersey State Assembly in Trenton.

#### CULTURAL EVENTS

Each year ASPIRA tries to incorporate into our educational programs, activities which will instill in our students a sense of pride in their ethnic heritage and help improve

their self-esteem. This year, in addition to participating in the New Jersey State-wide Puerto Rican Day Parade, and the Paterson Puerto Rican Day Parade, the leadership development unit formed a Dance Troupe which performs traditional folkloric dances from Puerto Rico and other Latin American countries. The Dance Troupe has successfully performed at various events and has proven to be an excellent vehicle for building comraderie amongst the participants.

#### FUTURE

During the past 10 years, ASPIRA has been requested by community leaders throughout the state to expand our services to serve even more of New Jersey's Puerto Rican and Hispanic youth. After much planning and hard work, ASPIRA is proud to announce that it will be expanding to the Counties of Camden and Mercer in September of 1987.

ASPIRA will also be implementing a new program geared towards young Hispanic girls in grades 6 through 8. It will focus on non-traditional vocational opportunities and careers. This will mark the first time that ASPIRA has been able to secure funding for a program to serve students at the elementary school level.

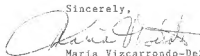
#### NEED

In 1988, ASPIRA will be celebrating its 20th Anniversary. Since ASPIRA's inception in 1968, over 24,000 students have been served, and over 4,700 have been placed in post-secondary institutions. Many of those people who went through the "ASPIRA PROCESS" are now leaders in government, business, and the community. Many have returned after completing their degree to make their contribution. ASPIRA is proud to boast that yesterday's ASPIRANTES are today's leaders and today's ASPIRANTES are tomorrow's leaders.

Last year First Jersey National Bank donated \$2,000. This year ASPIRA requests that First Jersey National Bank increase its support to \$3,000 to help ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey continue with its successful programs for Puerto Rican, Hispanic and other minority youth throughout the State of New Jersey. Please help ASPIRA make its 20th Anniversary the most successful year ever.

Thank you very much for your past support and we look forward to your continued assistance.

Sincerely,



Maria Vizcarrondo-DeSoto  
Executive Director